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Mar. 9.
1686.

*H. Maurice R^{mo} P. D.
Wilhelmo Archiepiscopo
Cant. & Sacris.*

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A
S E R M O N

Preached before the Right Honourable
GEORGE Earl of BERKELEY
GOVERNOUR,

And the
Company of Merchants of *England* trading
into the *Levant* Seas.

At St. Peter's Church in Broadstreet
Jan. 30. being Sunday, 168^e₇.

By William Hayley M. A. Fellow of *All-Souls* College
in *Oxon*; and Chaplain to his Excellency Sir Wil-
liam Trumbull Ambassador to *Constantinople*.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Samuel Smith at the *Prince's-Arms* in
St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1687.

A

S E R M O N

Preached before the Right Honourable
GEORGE EARL OF BARKLEY
GOVERNOR

And the

Company of Merchants of England trading
into the Levant Seas

At St. Paul's Church in London
Jan. 30. being Sunday 1788

By William Hays, M. A. Fellow of All Souls College
in Oxon, and Chaplain to his Excellency Sir W. M.
Pitt, General Ambassador for Great Britain

L O N D O N

Printed for Samuel Smith at the River-Press in
St. Paul's Church-Yard. 1788.

To the Right Honourable
GEORGE Earl of BERKELEY
GOVERNOUR,
And the Company of *Turky* Merchants.

Right Honourable, &c.

AS I cannot think you could have any other Motive to command the publication of this Discourse, than your customary Civility; so I am sufficiently sensible that it brings nothing along with it that can deserve your acceptance, but the entire submission I shew to your Orders, in an instance so contrary to my private inclinations.

I could have been extremely pleas'd to have had an opportunity of acknowledging your obligations, without exposing the weakness of my services; but even this way I must confess I am not without some satisfaction, in declaring publicly the sense I have of your unanimous kindness in the ready choice you made of so unworthy a Servant, and the pleasure I take in being related to a Company, whose Members are so considerable in themselves, and whose Commerce is so beneficial to the publick.

This is an honour which all my Predecessors in this Employ have been sensible of; but I must acknowledge

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The Epistle Dedicatory.

it yet a more particular advantage to my self, since it gives me a capacity of continuing in a Family, in which I have lived so much to my content, since I had the happiness of being admitted a Member of it, wherein I have seen so much exemplary Vertue, so frequent Charities, so constant and regular a Devotion, and so profound a respect for all things that are Sacred; that as it must be esteemed by all good men, so it cannot but be especially desirable for a Divine.

Concerning the Discourse it self I have nothing to say but that it is a plain persuasive to a Vertuous and Religious Life, and does not pretend to affected ornaments or beauty of style, that it designs to profit rather than delight, and so bears some resemblance to its Author, whose services, though they cannot be pompous, yet shall alwaies be faithful, whose constant prayers shall be for your temporal prosperity and eternal happiness, and who shall make it his business to endeavour to supply his want of Abilities, by acquitting himself with all fidelity and diligence as becomes

My Lord and Gentlemen;

Your most obliged and
most humble Servant,

William Hayley.

To



PROV. 8: 18.

*Riches and Honour are with me, yea
durable Riches and Righteousness.*

That Vertus and Piety secure our *Eternal* concerns, and that a good Life is the only means to assure us of happiness beyond the grave, is a thing that every one confesses who believes a Future State, or is persuaded that he has a Soul within him capable of Immortality: No one is so unreasonable as to contend that the sublime Joys of *Heaven* ought to be the portion of him that drowns himself in the base pleasures of *sin*, or that they are the most likely persons to be made companions of *Saints* and *Angels*, who render themselves unfit for the society of *Men*, and are debased into the number of the *Beasts* that perish.

Nay, that whatever is *true* and *substantial* happiness even in *this* Life, has a necessary dependance upon

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Morality

Morality and Religion, is the observation of all that pretend to study the mind of man, and the nature of things, and is denied by none, but by those who will either give themselves no time to think at all, or else will employ their thoughts upon nothing that is serious and profitable.

How troublesome, how unsatisfactory, yea and how pernicious too all our worldly goods are, is too too evident, when they are not directed by prudence, enjoyed with sobriety, and managed according to the dictates of Justice and Charity; and particularly *Wealth* and *Riches*, which are so eagerly prosecuted by mankind, as the instrument of all our necessities and conveniencies, are indeed but heavy incumbrances and unprofitable lumber, if they are not made use of to reward the good, to excite the diligent, and to relieve the oppressed. The *poor* man that enjoys quiet, repose and content in a mean estate; that neither wishes for wealth as a means to gratifie his lusts, nor gazes on it as an object that moves his envy; that fears God, loves his Neighbour, and relies upon the blessing of Providence, and the fruit of his Industry, is not only confessed by all considerate men to enjoy the *Truest Riches*, but is even frequently envied by those who find themselves surrounded with abundance and superfluity.

But that *Religion* should be the path that leads to *Wealth* and *Substance*, and that to be good is the way to become *rich*, this seems to be a Paradox contrary to the sentiments of mankind, the experience
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of all Ages, and the common voice of those who reflect upon the irregularities of the World, who have no one greater subject of complaint, than that the rewards of Vertue are possessed by Vice, that baseness, flattery, and hypocrisie, are provided with superfluities, whilst Goodness meets with nothing but empty applauses, and starves whilst it is commended.

Piety indeed may comfort us in our wants, and support us in our afflictions, and we may find help in God when we have none from men; nay, it may be an excellent *Steward* even of Riches themselves when they are once gotten, to lay them out for a greater purchase than Earth will afford, to manage them so, that they may neither rob us of our innocence, nor God of our hearts; but that it should be the best *Faëtor* to gain them, and store them up, that *Riches* should dwell with *Vertue*, and *durable Riches* with *Righteousness*, is an Assertion so opposite to the persuasion of the World, that it seems to be rather the wild affirmation of a person desirous to defend a Novelty, than the Doctrine of one that would inculcate a serious and a sober Truth.

The practice of the Age discovers to us very different means for the heaping up of Treasure; Craft and Subtlety, Fraud and Circumvention, Oppression and Rapine, Fawning and Hypocrisie, and other methods too shameful to name are, alas! the approved Arts of those who make *most hast to become rich*, and all the Channels in which Wealth is found to flow, seem to be

be such to which Piety and Religion are utter strangers, so that it may be the duty, and perhaps the happiness of good men, to *despise Riches*, but 'tis not like to be their fortune to *gain or enjoy them*.

But how repugnant soever the practice of the World may be, and however unfit *Religion and Vertue* may at first sight appear for the procuring of *Wealth* and Substance, yet upon a nearer view, and a fuller consideration, we shall find that they do really lead and conduct us to the most ample even of those enjoyments, that they are *all glorious within*, and that their *Clothing too is of wrought Gold*; that *Piety* is of that nature, that it need not affright us from her embraces by an apparent *Powerty*, that it does not only invite us by proposing the most real contentment, the most lasting delights, and the most sublime enjoyments of the mind and better part, but that even the avaricious may here find wherewith to content himself, and gratifie his most lavish desires: For so we are told by one of the greatest of men, seated in the most advantageous prospect, in possession of the greatest wealth and abundance, and what is more, inspired by God himself with a Divine judgment and understanding, and therefore certainly one who was most able to judge what is the best method of acquisition, by him I say we are informed that *Piety* is the surest and straitest way to *wealth*; for as he tells us in the words of my Text, *Riches and Honour are with her, yea durable Riches and Righteousness*.

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The Relative *Me* in my Text has relation to *Wisdom*, whom Solomon introduces speaking in the 12th verse of this Chapter, and by *Wisdom* is generally meant in this Book of *Proverbs*, that which only deserves the name of *True Wisdom*, i. e. *Virtue* and the *Fear of God*: For so the wise man explains himself when he says, *The Fear of the Lord is the beginning*, or (as the Original rather signifies) the perfection of *Wisdom*, and therefore the sense of the words is what I have already hinted it to be, viz. *With Piety are Riches and Honour, yea durable Riches and Righteousness*.

There is nothing more usual in the Writings of Solomon, than to reiterate the same Assertion in substance with some variation of phrase. So at c. 12. v. 28. it is said, *In the way of Righteousness there is life, and in the path-way thereof there is no death*. And c. 5. v. 22. *His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins*. And in conformity to these and many other places of the like nature, I take the two parts of my Text to signify one and the same thing, and that the different expression is only to set off the Truth more advantageously, and the repetition to inculcate and impress it the deeper upon the minds of men: So that *Riches and Honour* in this place signifies the same thing as *Riches and Righteousness*, and the difference lies only in the addition of *durable*, to make the latter part of the sentence more elegant and pathetic.

Now

Now *Righteousness* signifying most frequently in *Scripture*, especially when it is joyned with *Riches*, that part of general Righteousness or universal Justice which is opposite to Avarice, and is usually called *Liberality and Charity*, the sense of the latter clause will be, that Piety gives durable Riches, and dispositions likewise to make a liberal and charitable use of them; and consonant to this the *Honour* in the first part of my Text must denote that honour which arises from such a bountiful management of Riches, and so is the *consequent* and *effect* of Righteousness, which is nothing else but that due management. And thus the whole sense of the words seems to be briefly comprised in these three particulars. That Piety is the most effectual means,

1. To gain Riches certainly.
2. To enjoy them durably. And
3. To use them honourably.

But this last Proposition, that Piety teaches to manage Riches *honourably*, is that which will at first sight be granted by all men of reason; since if *Honour* be taken in the true notion, 'tis nothing else but the *Testimony* that is given to *virtuous* and good actions, and therefore cannot arise properly from any thing that is not guided by *Piety*. Nay, nothing is more dishonourable and detestable than to use Riches as the Idols of our affections, or the instruments of our vices, to covet them, doat upon them, and put our trust in them; or to make them subservient to gratifie our lusts, oppress our neighbours, or obstruct the

the course of Laws and Justice. I shall therefore wave this as granted on all hands, and confine my present Discourse to the former parts of my Text, which seem more to stand in need of proof and illustration: Namely, that Piety is the *most effectual* means to gain Riches, and to secure and perpetuate the possession of them.

The *most effectual* means, I say; for before I proceed further, I must premise, that all the sentences that occur in this Book of *Proverbs* are not universally infallible, and uncapable of any exception, but that the Book does chiefly consist of such *Observations* as are generally true, and such *Rules* as Prudence would commonly dictate: To give an instance of each, 'tis a *Rule* given, c. 22. v. 26. *Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are Sureties for Debts.* And 'tis an *Observation*, c. 10. v. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortned.* Now the former of these is not so to be understood as if all Suretiship were utterly unlawful, and that there could never happen a case in which Love, Gratitude or Charity might require it at our hands; but that it is very *prudential* not to engage in it commonly, nor without due caution, and previous consideration. Nor is the latter to be taken in that sense, that God does never call a good man to himself before he arrives at Grey hairs, or that the wicked are alwaies cut off in the vigor of their youth, but that in the ordinary course of things, and the common dispensation of Providence, the fear of the Lord does tend to the prolonga-

tion of life, and wickedness and debauchery hasten our dissolution.

Now agreeably to these and such like places, the meaning of my Text is not that good men are always favoured with Wealth and Riches, or that they never lose them when once obtained; nor that 'tis impossible for very vicious persons sometimes to be raised to Fortunes and Estates; but that however God in his extraordinary Providence may dispose of things, however he may sometimes in his Wrath let sin flourish to make up the measure of its wickedness; may let the *ungodly* be *lusty and strong*, secure from the misfortunes of other men, and prosperous till their *Eyes swell with fatness*, and they do even *what they list*: And however on the contrary it may please him to deny Riches to the good and vertuous, or to deprive them of those he had formerly given them, either to manifest his own Power, to try their patience, to divert their minds from the World to better things, or by an act of the greatest mercy to deliver them from the temptation, when his Omniscience foresees they would be ensnared by them: Whatever, I say, may be the *extraordinary* dispositions of God's Providence, yet *ordinarily* speaking, and according to the common course of things, Vertue and good living does promote our temporal advantage, Piety does contribute in its own tendency to the acquisition and enjoyment of Wealth, doth naturally exert both her Bounty and her Power, does first *enrich*, and then *protect* her Volaries.

1. To

1. To begin therefore with the *first*, that Piety is the most effectual means to obtain Riches. Now the truth of this will appear from these following *Considerations*.

1. That Riches are the gift of God; that they are not the goods of *Fortune*, as Fortune is taken for *Chance* or Accident, but as it is taken for the over-ruling *Providence* of God himself, who as supream Lord and Master of the Universe, disposes of all things in it according to his own good will and pleasure. Whatever means mans desire can propose to it self, or his industry make use of, have all their *being* dependent upon this great Governour of the World, and their *success* owing to his blessing. Dost thou depend upon the work of thy hands, or the contrivance of thy thoughts, thy bodily strength, or the labour of thy mind? both these are the power of that God who formed the one, and inspired the other, who by one single disease can enfeeble the limbs, and blind the understanding, can convert the most active force into trembling and weakness, and the most excellent judgment into frenzy and dotage. Dost thou promise thy self full Barns, and expect encrease by the crop of thy fields? 'Tis the same God that gives the former and latter Rain in its season, and who can make a fruitful Land barren, when provoked by the wickedness of those that dwell therein. Art thou happy in the favour of thy Prince, and perswadeest thy self thou shalt be enrich'd by his bounty? reflect that it was the Lord who gave *Joseph* and *Dauid* favour in the sight of their Masters, and that in his hands are the hearts of Kings, and he turns them as the Rivers of Waters. The stream of these
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earthly

earthly Gods affection flows from the *heavenly* one, and thou must have first gain'd *his* favour, before thou canst hope to reap any good from that of his *Vicerent*. Dost thou go down to the *Sea in Ships*, and occupy thy *business in great waters*? even there thou mayest see the Providence of God, and his *Wonders in the deep*; the stormy Winds are at his command, and the destruction of all thy substance depends but upon the breath of his mouth; thou relieft in vain upon the strength of thy Vessels, and the skill of thy Pilots, if his mercy deliver thee not from the rage of the deep, and bring thee to the *Haven where thou wouldst be*.

And indeed whoever does believe that there is a God, and consequently a wise and *provident* Governour of the World, must be forced to grant that the success of all human enterprizes depends upon *his* disposition of things; but lest we should not read this Lesson plain enough in the Book of *Nature*, and so look no farther than our selves, and *sacrifice to our own Nets*, lest we should admire our wisdom and management, and pride our selves that we have worked out our own Fortunes, there is scarce any thing that we are more frequently put in mind of in Scripture, than that Plenty is the gift of Heaven, and that *'tis the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich*. I shall instance only in that one place of *Deut. 8. 11, 12.* and following verses; *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments, and his Judgments, and his Statutes, which I command thee this day, lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt*

dwell therein, and thy flocks and thy herds multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God—and thou say in thine heart, My power and the strength of my hand hath gotten me this wealth; but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth.

If therefore it be the blessing of God that maketh rich, and our increase be but the gift of his bounty, what can give us a more probable expectation of it than *Piety* and *Vertue*? These are the things that are grateful in his sight; persons that live according to these Rules, have the honour of God's own approbation, and he calls them his good and faithful *Servants*; Nay, what is yet more, they have the glorious character of his *Friends* and *Favourites*, and who then should more reasonably hope for his gifts, than those that serve him religiously, and endeavour to please him? If they are the *Favourites* of the Almighty, they may expect them as signs of his love, if they be his faithful *Servants*, as rewards of their fidelity.

2. But if we are too short-sighted to discover the supream original and fountain of all our enjoyments, if the hand of God reaching out unto us our acquisitions be not sufficiently visible to our mortal Eyes, yet let us in the second place consider what *Piety* is; examine it in its self, and in its consequences, and we shall find it to be naturally productive of *Riches* and *Plenty*.

Piety.

Piety in its latitude is nothing else but the habitual practice of Moral and Divine Vertues, and if we do but reflect upon those, we shall find that there is not one in the whole Catalogue, but is either of an evident and immediate tendency, or proves at least mediately instrumental to the enriching of its followers. For instance, *Industry* or a vigorous prosecution of the works of our Calling, not the least considerable of Moral Vertues, is the very Parent of Wealth and Plenty. *He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich, Prov. 10. 4.* Industry is a noble sort of *Chymistry*, which extracts *Oar* out of the most mean and unlikely matter; and there is scarce any Employment so low, any Capacity so weak and shallow, but, if *diligence* be not wanting, affords and procures not only what is necessary for life, but also a convenient provision for dependencies. *Temperance* does more than one way contribute to the same end, it preserves the health of the body, and the vigor of the mind, two things highly necessary for the facilitating any of our designs; it saves and preserves that time to add to our store, which its contrary vice would employ, or rather lose in diminishing it; 'tis a Vertue of a double consequence, it *secures* our possessions, and *encreases* them, and like the Builders of *Jerusalem*, with one hand raises the Wall, and with the other is arm'd against those that would demolish it. *Humility* inclines the mind to think nothing is below it which is a part of its duty, and so provides for it self by descending to those Offices which the fastidiousness of *Pride* would starve rather than put its hand unto.

Peace

Peace, Concord, and Brotherly Love, how do they tend to the enriching of the publick, and the prosperity of all! *Wealth* flourishes and grows only where it is cherished with the soft gales of *Peace*, the rough storms of *War* with its attendants, *Wast*, *Rapine* and *Plunder*, blast and destroy it. *Concord* has alwaies had the reputation of increasing the smallest *Estates*, and *Discord* and *Quarrels*, of ruining the greatest; and then *Brotherly Love*, and *Mutual Help* makes every person of a double strength, and interchangeable kind offices and good turns help to exalt all together without the downfal of any.

Liberality and *Charity*, whose office seems to be only to dispend and lay out what Providence and Industry bring in, even these themselves, which is something surprizing, have not the least share in enriching us: By *Liberality* I mean that *Benevolence* which respects others as they are *Servants* and *Inferiours*; by *Charity* that which has regard to them as *necessitous* and *in distress*.

For first, *Liberality* excites the affections, strengthens the hands, and redoubles the diligence of those that serve us, adds love to their duty, and by that active principle makes them break through the greatest difficulties, rather than lie under the shameful imputation of insensibility and ingratitude: So that what a man laies out liberally is as politickly as it is generously disposed, the fruit of it will abundantly answer the expence, and the seed sown in all probability produce a plentiful crop.

And:

And secondly, *Charity* which dispences its goods for the deliverance of the oppressed, the sustenance of the poor, and the comfort of the miserable, will be so far from exhausting our stores, that its returns will at last be as *ample*, though perhaps not so *immediately visible* as those of *Frugality* it self: Not to mention the prevalency of the prayers of an afflicted Soul with Almighty God, which are importunate cravers, and generally successful intercessors for blessings upon the charitable, the vertue it self, even in its *natural* consequents, will not be unaccompanied with considerable advantages.

For *Charity* affects and warms the heart of those who receive it, as well as their miseries do the bowels of those that dispence it; and as it moves their *Tongues* in prayers, so will it likewise their *Hands* too in services and acknowledgments. Besides, 'tis not a single person that is gained by a single act of *Charity*; all that are poor and miserable look upon themselves as a certain *Fraternity*, and he that obliges and relieves one, is blest by all the rest; they all think themselves bound to consult his advantage, to do him service, and to endeavour the encrease of his riches, who they see is ready upon occasion to dispence them to their use. Now the most *Rich* do depend upon the ministry of the *Poor*, 'tis their hands that gain Riches who possess the least of them; the winning therefore of these to our service, which is the natural consequence of *Charity*, is the drawing in of more hands to our Aid, and consequently the addition of more matter to enrich us.

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Throw therefore *thy bread upon these waters, and it shall return to thee after many days*: Charity is a fountain which at last flows into the Sea with a much greater current than that it at first received from it; what is thus bestowed shall be given back with ample interest and advantage, for the charitable man shall still have abundance, and *the liberal soul shall be made fat*.

It would be too long to enumerate all the rest of the Vertues in particular, and to shew the *apparent* influence of some, and the certain, though *unseen* concurrence of others to advance the Fortunes of those that exercise them: These I have instanced in sufficiently make good the assertion, that Vertues have a natural tendency to enrich good men, and that they who *seek the Kingdom of God and its Righteousness*, are in a fair expectation of having *all these things added to them*. I shall therefore hasten to my third Consideration to evince this truth, and that is this.

3. Credit and Reputation in the World have a very great dependence upon honesty and an upright life, and they are things absolutely necessary for the promotion of our wealth and worldly interest. *A good name is not only more precious than gold*, but it is that which is instrumental in the obtaining of it. Riches arise from a *multiplicity* of business, and *that* is never so apt to flow to any, as to him that has the reputation of just and faithful: No man loves to concern himself with a person in whom he can have no confidence, and *confidence* can never arise but from our

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own experience, or other mens attestation of the fidelity and honesty of him with whom we have to do.

This is so apparent, that whosoever wrongs a man in his credit, is reckoned to be more injurious to him, than he that robs him of his goods; since the one only takes away what he has at present, but the other deprives him of the means of ever getting more; and accordingly all persons that have any commerce in the world, make it their greatest business to conserve a good name and a fair reputation.

But certainly the only *solid* foundation of a good name is Piety and Vertue; for how can he be thought to be *just* to his Neighbour, who will *rob* his God of that honour that is due to him; or to have any concern for the goods of another man, that has not the least care for his own Soul? This is so well known, that they who are not truly vertuous, are yet forced tacitly to confess the prevalency of Piety, and to counterfeit that in appearance which they want in reality.

But without doubt, if the outside and image of Vertue be at all effectual, the substance of it must be much more so, must be a more certain, a more solid, and a more durable foundation of credit and a good name. Hypocrisie stands upon a very slippery ground, 'tis a difficult thing for it to be so quick-sighted as to take all its steps and measures aright, and yet the least trip discovers the design, unmasks the deceit, and proves the downfall of the Hypocrite. Besides, dissimulation

lation puts the mind and thoughts to a kind of rack; 'tis a constant torture alwaies to stifle ones real sentiments, and pretend the contrary: Now 'tis next to impossible that Nature should continually endure this violence without ever exerting it self, the *Heart* is too active not sometimes to master the *Tongue* and *Hands*; and whenever this happens, whenever providence, heedlesnes or prevalency of passion laies open the intrigue, the hypocrisie serves but to make the man more ridiculou and detestable; and the paint is but the more loathed for the resemblance it had to a real beauty.

But true and intrinsick worth is an easie and a stable foundation of repute, the good man follows his own natural course, and makes no turnings to blind his designs, he is never afraid of the nearest search, nor ever stands in need of a subtle contrivance; *time* it self that defaces all things, and discovers Hypocrites, does but add to his lustre, makes *his Righteousness as clear as the light, and his just dealing as the noon-day*: The roots of his reputation are sound, as well as its branches flourishing, the longer it stands, the more substantial it grows, and its very old Age is blooming and fruitful. Since therefore Vertue does so certainly produce and conserve a good name, it must be also the Parent of Wealth and Riches, which depend upon nothing more than a general confidence the world has in us, and an universal reputation of honesty and fidelity.

4. And lastly, That Piety and Vertue are the most
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effectual

effectual means of obtaining Riches, will hence appear, in that they direct to the use of those methods which are *honest* and *lawful*, and abominate all such as are *false* and *unjust*: Now that the laudable and allowed means of acquisition must be likewise in their own nature the most efficacious and successful will certainly be confessed, if we consider that *they* are such as are chalked out, allowed and commanded by Almighty God for this end, and the *contrary* are but the suggestions of the Devil, and the inventions of vicious men; if therefore the honest means of gain are not also such as are really and in effect the most productive of their end, one of these absurdities must necessarily follow, either that God Almighty did not know what were the fittest means, or that he is not able to make them successful, or else that he delights in the disappointments of mankind; the *first* of which would be a blasphemous robbing of God of his Wisdom and Omniscience, and would make the Father of Lies more prudent in his contrivances than the Father of Spirits; the *second* would be a ridiculous denial of his Omnipotence and Power, and would make the efficacy of Divine Wisdom out-done by the wicked policy of the worst of men; and the *last* would prove too undecent a reflection upon his Justice and Goodness, and would infer that God himself constantly does, what the height of human Tyranny and Cruelty seldom arrives to, please himself with the pains and troubles of the innocent, and the fruitless toils and labours of the industrious.

And indeed if we would but reflect *calmly* and impartially,

partially, we should find that not only Reason, but *Experience* too confirms this assertion, that the honestest means are generally the surest; and if we could but persuade our selves to make our observations of the occurrences in the World without envy, malice; or satyr, we should discover more instances of Families raised, Estates gained, and Fortunes made, by diligence and labour, justice and truth, honest dealing and fidelity, and by actions truly noble and generous, than by slight, tricks, hypocrisie, perjury and baseness; so that if we would either follow the light of *Reason*, or the conduct of *Example*, we must walk in the plain path that God laies open to us, and never consult our own vicious inclinations for by-discoveries, must be diligent in our Callings, and honest in our designs, despite any helps that are shameful and base, and trust to Providence for happiness and success.

2. Piety therefore is in its own nature the most effectual means of obtaining the goods of this World, and the *vertuous* man is most likely to be *rich*; yet still all Riches are but transitory things, *they make themselves wings and fly away*; can Vertue change their uncertain nature, and make that which is so slippery become firm and stable? yes even in this respect too the prevalency of goodness is very conspicuous; though it does not pretend *infally* to assure our temporal enjoyments, and to make its acquisitions as eternal as it self, yet it brings along with it the greatest security such things are capable of; durable Riches are with her, she does not only assist her Votaries in their pursuit, but confirms them likewise in a lasting possession, which is my second particular. Now

Now the securing of Riches, or making them durable, may be considered in a double respect, either (1.) In relation to our selves, or (2.) In relation to our posterity.

1. In relation to our selves ; Piety contributes to the securing of Plenty and Riches to their present possessors, or to those that gain them ; and here though the matter be capable of very ample illustration from several *Topicks*, yet it being an approved Maxim, that *all things are best preserved by the same means they are produced*, having already proved that Vertue is the best method of acquiring Wealth, I need not spend much time to evince that 'tis the best means of preserving it likewise ; to omit therefore the Arguments which may be taken from the blessing of God which surrounds his Servants with his Providence, from the love and kindness of men which is a natural product of goodness, from the hatred and envy that constantly attends those who raise themselves by undue means, from the unconstancy of Vice it self, and consequently of all that depends upon it ; to omit, I say, these and several other such like heads of discourse, I shall confirm this present Proposition only with these two Considerations.

1. That whatever is got by means that are repugnant to Piety, is not to be kept, but must be parted with ; Repentance is a severe sort of Physick, and must purge away all our acquired corruptions, before it can restore us into a state of spiritual health ; restitution of what we have unjustly gotten from our Neighbour
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is absolutely necessary in order to our reconciliation with God; that must be returned by *compassion* and charity, which was extorted by *rapine* and oppression; whatever was got by flattering or assisting others in their debaucheries, must be employed in that which shall promote Piety, and encourage the virtuous; the fruits of perfidy, fraud and deceit must be all amassed together, to make a Free-will Offering for the sins that gained them, and we must wash our hands of the *product*, if ever we would have our Souls washed of the *guilt*; what a miserable sort of delusion is this, to make haste to heap up Riches by such means, that if ever we consider we must make more haste to refund them!

Whereas he that scorns any ill means of encreasing his store, and makes his desires still move in obedience to his duty, he that lays hold on nothing, but that to which Justice gives him a right, nor consults the Devil and his lusts to gain that which is the gift of God, such a man finds himself secure in his enjoyments, he can shew his title to them by the grant of the King of Kings, whom he has faithfully served, and by whose bounty he hath been enriched, can with *Samuel* challenge the whole world to lay claim to any thing in his hands, he can look on his own Fortune, without reflecting on his Neighbours ruine, and as he gain'd *honestly* and without sin, so he can enjoy *securely* and without remorse.

2. My second Consideration to prove that Vertue contributes to the securing of Riches, is that all Vices have a natural tendency to impoverish mankind, and were not the gains of impiety to be refunded, yet its
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own sinful off-spring would devour and consume them. To instance in some few, *Ambition* treads upon Wealth, if it be to mount to honour, and will make it self really poor only to have the vanity of appearing great; *Luxury* and Riot know no bounds, and the revenue of Nature it self will scarce satisfy the appetite of that person that gives himself over to the dominion of his palate; *Lust* and Debauchery destroy Body and Estate together, and the greatest comfort they afford, is that they ruine the Person as fast as his Wealth, and the man is not like to survive his Poverty; *Idleness* and Sloth does constantly waste without any acquisition, and lets that rust and corrupt through disuse, that should be preserved and improved by action and management; *Anger*, *Envy* and *Malice* engage in enmity and quarrels, chargeable always in the carrying on, and in the consequence generally pernicious; and *Faction* and Disobedience expose the Authors to the vengeance of the Magistrate, and their Fortunes fall a Victim to Justice.

Even *Avarice* it self which locks up and guards what it has with-held from its own nourishment and the wants of the distressed, does not only rob it self of the use of what it has, and so *in effect* makes it as if it were not, but seems also to provoke the whole world to engage in its ruine; the avaricious person is looked upon as a common enemy, and every one rejoices when he is either by subtlety or force spoiled of his beloved Mammon, he invites Thieves to rob him, the cunning to deceive him, and generally even his nearest Relations to cheat and circumvent him; in short, he has
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the constant torment of being always watchful and never secure; so that Vertue must needs be an admirable preservative of our Fortunes, in preventing so many *spoilers* which our lust, passion or folly do naturally produce, in securing us from all that might impoverish us from within by *humility, diligence and temperance*; and defending us from all that may hurt us from without, by the exercise of *kindness, obedience and charity*.

2. But the efficacy of Piety is not bounded here, it reaches beyond the grave, and entails its blessings upon future generations; posterity is secured by it in the enjoyment of the Fortunes of its predecessors, and the good man is a *Benefactor* as well as a *Parent* even to remote successions, which is the last thing I am to shew.

It was well observed by the *Poet*, that the third Heir has seldom cause to vaunt of an Estate unjustly gotten, the curse of God goes along with it, and a secret worm eats and devours it; as the means of getting it were shameful, and could not bear the light, so the ruine of it is wrought by an invisible hand, and we see the *downfall* even when we cannot discern the *blow*. Though God Almighty may sometimes, for reasons best known to his Divine Wisdom, not only suffer the ungodly to flourish like a green Bay-tree, but to have *Children likewise at his desire*, to die in peace, and leave *the rest of his substance to his Babes*, yet the next that goes by observes that his Family is gone, *he seeks him, but his place can no where be found*; the vain hopes of calling the Land after his own name are soon vanished, and there is now no means left to know that there

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ever was such a person, but the greatness of his ruins, or the curst memory of his oppressions.

But the generation of the faithful shall be blessed as well as himself, *riches and honours are established in his house, and his righteousness endureth for ever.* God is pleased for the encouraging of Vertue, to take care not only of good men themselves, but likewise of that which is their greatest concern, their Children and Posterity, and so to *shew mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his Commandments*; even wicked persons themselves have been spared, blessings continued, yea and Kingdoms prolonged in a Family, for the sake of an *Abraham, an Israel or a David.* Besides, if Riches have been obtained by laudable means, the same Piety which regulated their acquisition, will mould and instruct those that are to inherit them, and will make Parents as solicitous of propagating their Piety as their Being to their posterity, and so support their Family with the double foundation of their descendants Vertues and their own; so that he that shall begin his observations young, and continue them on to a good old age, yet shall scarce ever discover in all the varieties of the world, one *righteous man forsaken, or his seed begging their bread.*

By what has been said I hope I have in some measure evinced the truth of what I at first proposed, namely, that Piety and Vertue, though they are not *infallible* and never-failing means of raising a Fortune in the world, yet are in their own nature and according to the *common* course of things, the most *probable*

able means of acquiring Wealth and Riches, of securing their possession to our selves, and continuing their descent to our posterity, and that therefore riches and honour are with them, yea durable riches and righteousness.

From the preceding Discourse there may be several very useful Inferences drawn, to which I cannot now speak particularly; As (1.) We may hence discover the infinite love of God to us, in endeavouring to win us to our duty by two Motives so agreeable to human Nature, as the enriching our selves, and providing for our posterity. (2.) The great *folly*, as well as wickedness of pursuing unjust gain, or using unlawful means of acquisition. (3.) The unreasonableness of retaining what Piety, Charity, or any other part of our duty calls upon us to dispencc. (4.) The *imprudence* as well as sinfulness of spending that time which is set apart for devotion and the service of God upon our private employments. And (5.) The unhappy mistake of too many Parents, in thinking they have made a good provision for their Children, when they have taught them cunning and policy, and instructed them in an Employment, without imprinting in their minds the Rules of Vertue, and the Principles of Religion. But not having time to prosecute these, I must content myself barely to have named them, and must recommend these, and such other Inferences that arise from what has been said, to your own private meditation.

Now to God the Father, &c.

F I N I S.